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LETTER DATED 22 DECEMBER 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to present to you the attached letter, dated 20 December 1994, from Mr. Mirko Pejanovic, member of the Presidency of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and President of the Serb Civic Council of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, which encloses the "Declaration of the Assembly of Citizens of Serbian Nationality and Serb Ethnic Origin" (see annex).

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the present letter and its annex as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 20 December 1994 from the President of the Serb Civic Council of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the President of the Security Council

Since the beginning of the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, neither the aggression against its territorial integrity, nor the genocidal assault on its Moslem population, nor indeed the aim of ethnic partition, have ever enjoyed support among the majority of Bosnian citizens of Serb nationality. We wish to remind you in this regard that, out of their original number of 1.3 million, today less than 600,000 live on the territory under Karadzic's control - under a brutal military regime that brooks no dissent. As for the other 700,000, 400,000 have become refugees in other countries, 200,000 still live on the territory remaining under the control of the Government in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while an estimated 100,000 have lost their lives as a result of the war.

We assure you that this other half of the Serb community of Bosnia and Herzegovina favours peace and a political resolution of this conflict. It supports an integral and multinational Bosnia and Herzegovina as a State in which Bosnian Muslims, Serbs and Croats would live on the basis of full equality. As you know, Serbs who live on the territory under the control of the legal Government participate in political parties of civic orientation, in common organs of the state administration and in the army. In March this year, an assembly was held of citizens of Serb nationality living on free territory. It adopted a declaration, a copy of which we enclose. It also established a Serb Civic Council, which was mandated to represent the will of those Serbs who desire peaceful coexistence for all our country's peoples within the integral borders of the internationally recognized State of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Serb Civic Council believes that the peace process cannot be successful, and in particular sufficient pressure cannot be put upon Karadzic's side to accept the Contact Group peace plan, unless the international community recognizes the interest and will of this other half of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Serb community, who have accepted the plan. The will of these Serbs is represented by the Serb Civic Council. We wish to mention here that our Council is in touch with Bosnian Serbs who have fled the country and with clandestine dissident groups in the area under Karadzic's control, as well as with democratic forces in the Republic of Serbia.

For this reason, in the interests of peace and the defence of human rights, we ask you to support our demand that the legitimate will of these Serbs be recognized within the mechanism of the peace process; and that, consequently, Karadzic be denied the usurped and fictitious right to represent all Serbs in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

In other words, we demand formal recognition by the Contact Group countries of the existence of two separate and politically opposite Serb options: one represented by Karadzic and based on naked force; the other represented by the Serb Civic Council, which has chosen peace and inter-ethnic coexistence. Since

we are convinced that long-term peace and stability in the Balkans depends on the tolerance and cooperation of all who live there, and that the Contact Group countries wish to see a solution based on this postulate, we appeal to you to support solutions reflecting the actual reality among the Serbs of Bosnia and Herzegovina, thus enabling the Serb Civic Council to take its rightful place in the peace process.

With this in view, we kindly ask whether you would be prepared to receive a delegation of the Serb Civic Council and give us an opportunity to put to you our views and suggestions for the political solution to the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

We hope you will give our request urgent consideration.

(Signed) Mirko PEJANOVIC
President of the Serb Civic Council

Enclosure

Declaration of the Assembly of Citizens of Serbian Nationality and of Serb Ethnic Origin

Citizens of Serbian nationality and of Serb ethnic origin in the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of various political convictions, both believers and atheists, condemn the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, demand peace, without any delay, and negotiations as the civilized way of resolving conflicts and disputes.

The Assembly emphasizes that no political objective whatsoever can justify the suffering of innocent people, genocide and ethnic cleansing committed against all the citizens, against Bosnian Muslims in particular, and destruction of huge material and spiritual assets.

Therefore, we voice our protest again, in order to bring to trial all those who have inspired and perpetrated war crimes, based on the principle of individual responsibility and guilt and against every form of imposing collective responsibility.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is an historical fact and its future lies in its independence and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. It is only the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina who have the inalienable right to arrange their country the way they want it.

We plead for a republic constituted on the principles of parliamentary democracy and political pluralism in which human rights and freedoms will be guaranteed equally to all its citizens.

The Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be arranged as a federal State, on the principle of regional and local self-governance, without ethnic connotations and dominations. Federal authority should be established on a parity basis, while regional and local ones should be established on the proportional participation of citizens of all ethnic groups. Mechanisms should be established on the entire territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to prevent every form of hegemony and domination by a majority based on ethnic or religious grounds.

We plead for a social and economic system founded on a market economy, equality of all forms of ownership, free enterprise and openness to new ideas, know-how and knowledge.

It is in such solutions that we see the fulfilment of the interests of Serbian people, on equal grounds, together with Bosnians and Croats as well as other ethnic groups.

The Assembly particularly underlines that the crucial prerequisite for peace and for the stable development of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the reciprocal recognition of all the States originating from the former

Yugoslavia, the restoration of mutual confidence and cooperation and, eventually, joining on the basis of full equality.

The Assembly insists on the complete recovery of human and civic rights. These are the presumptions of modern and democratic society within which the full appreciation and fostering of specific ethnic traits, heritage and culture, full national equality within and outside the government institutions and bodies, would be realized.

The Assembly calls upon all the citizens, particularly those of Serbian nationality and Serb ethnic origin, to commit themselves to the building of confidence among people based on the tradition and mutual understanding, respect and appreciation of national, political, cultural, religious and other specific traits.

Today, the citizens of Serbian nationality and Serb ethnic origin, those who have always declared themselves in favour of peaceful settlement of the existing problems, are looking for a fair peace, freedom and a democratic society.

They have endeavoured and will continue to do so, despite all temptations, to build the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina, jointly and equally with its other citizens.

We deny anyone, particularly the Serbian democratic party, which is the principal culprit of the ethnic conflict and aggression, the claim to represent all the citizens of Serb ethnic origin. We deny the same to any political subject who could cause ethnic conflict and suffering of the citizens.

We underline the importance of the struggle against every nationalism within its own people. Because, besides causing damage and evil to its own people, it generates nationalism with other peoples. We also oppose all individuals who, through their secret and open actions, provoke ethnic hatred and conflict for the sake of their selfish interests, which they promote as national interests and even as the interests of the State itself. They provide ground for fascism and pose a lethal threat to the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina and its citizens.

The Assembly rejects every attempt to create a new demographic map of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and strongly condemns the methods of ethnic cleansing and forcible displacement of people. We demand from the international community and all the authorities to create the necessary conditions for the safe return of all citizens to their homes, and also to provide compensation for all their hardships.

Fully aware of the evil caused by the war, national fascism and ethnic divisions, we appeal upon all the political parties, civic associations, cultural institutions and religious communities to convene jointly a convention of confidence of the citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We want to live in peace and freedom and to share it with all the others.

Our lasting objective and task is to struggle for an integral, democratic Bosnia and Herzegovina, a community of free and equal citizens and peoples.

The Assembly considers that the will of the citizens of Serbian nationality and origin who live on the territory under the control of the legal authorities of the Republic of Bosnia and Herzegovina should be represented by the Serb Civic Council before the international factors and in the peace process.